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University of Texas at Dallas
School of Arts & Humanities
Second 5-Week Session/Summer

Mon./Wed. 5:30 - 10:00

p.m.

HIST 6340.59M: SCANDALS, TRIALS, AND MICROHISTORY

Since the 1970s, microhistory has established itself as an important methodology within cultural history. Microhistory focuses close attention on seemingly minor or intensely "local" events from the past in order to discover what possibilities and constraints shaped human behavior at specific historical moments. Scandals and trials provide an exemplary opportunity for this sort of analysis, for they create a highly charged confrontation between individuals and a variety of social institutions and discourses.

In this seminar we will read and discuss some foundational works (and a few recent essays) in microhistory. These studies examine scandals and trials from the fifteenth through the twentieth centuries. Our goal will be to identify and critique the range of approaches these historians have taken; to articulate what microhistory means as a field; and to explore the potential and limitations of this form of historical writing. We will also work on strengthening your bibliographic research skills.

Required texts:

Natalie Z. Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*

Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*

Amy Gilman Srebnick, *The Mysterious Death of Mary Rogers: Sex and Culture in Nineteenth-Century New York*

Plus one of the following:

Gene Brucker, *Giovanni and Lusanna: Love & Marriage in Renaissance Florence*

Steven Ozment, *The Burgermeister's Daughter: Scandal in a 16th-Century German Town*

Additional readings are available electronically and on Reserve at McDermott Library

Course requirements:

Seminar preparation and participation; submission by email of 3 discussion questions for each session with readings; four bibliographic assignments; oral presentation; 5- to 7-page book review; 10- to 15-page review essay.

NOTE:

- More than 1 absence, persistent tardiness, or failure to participate in discussions will lower your final grade.
- All course work must be completed in order to pass the course.
- No late assignments will be accepted.
- Use of electronic devices in the classroom is by permission of instructor

--This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

The University of Texas at Dallas has rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of business. It is the responsibility of each student to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations governing student conduct and activities. Information on student conduct and discipline is contained within the Handbook of Operating Procedures in the Student Code of Conduct: <http://policy.utdallas.edu/utdsp5003>.

Every effort will be made to accommodate students with disabilities. The full range of resources available through and procedures concerning Accessibility Services can be found at: www.utdallas.edu/studentaccess.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and falsifying academic records. Please familiarize yourself with the University's policies concerning academic integrity: <http://www.utdallas.edu/conduct/integrity/>.

All written work and class discussion for this course must employ gender-neutral, nonsexist language and rhetorical constructions. Such practice is part of a classroom environment according full respect and opportunity to all participants by all others.

Formal written work must always be paginated, double-spaced, presented in clear 10- to 12-point type, and free of mechanical and typographical errors. You are required to use the Turabian form of citation (foot- or endnotes) and bibliography and to do so correctly and consistently: Kate L. Turabian, *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, & Dissertations* (Chicago, 2013).

CLASS SCHEDULE

July 6: INTRODUCTION

July 11: G. Levi, "On Microhistory"
C. Ginzburg, "Microhistory"
I. Szijártó, "Four Arguments for Microhistory"

July 13: C. Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*
D. LaCapra, "The Cheese and the Worms"

July 18: N. Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*
R. Findlay, "The Refashioning of Martin Guerre"
N. Davis, "On The Lame"

screening of *Le Retour de Martin Guerre*, dir. D. Vigne (1983)

July 20: R. Darnton, "Workers Revolt"
R. Chartier, "Texts, Symbols, and Frenchness"
R. Darnton, "The Symbolic Element in History"
H. Mah, "Surpressing the Text"

- July 25: ***4- to 6-page book review due in class***
- July 27: J. Lepore, “Historians Who Love Too Much”
 M. Trotti, “The Lure of the Sensational Murder”
 D. Brien, “Five Food Microhistories”
 S. Magnússon, “Tales of the Unexpected”
- August 1: A. Srebnick, *The Mysterious Death of Mary Rogers*:
- August 3: T. Andrade, “A Chinese Farmer, Two African Boys, and A
 Warlord”
 E. Avrutin, “Ritual Murder in a Russian Border Town”
 L. Earner-Byrne, “The Rape of Mary M”
- August 8: ***Oral presentations***
- August 11: ***10- to 15-page final review essay due by noon to turnitin.com***